From: [redacted]
To: Joanna Vincent
Subject: Access to Ellenbrook Fields
Date: 15 March 2026 11:26:18

Dear Ms Vincent,

I have lived in St Albans for 40 years and enjoy walking round Ellenbrook Fields with friends (and their families and dogs) in all weathers and all seasons.

This is my personal response to the consultation on Brett Aggregates' revised Public Access Strategy ("the proposal") in relation to the application to quarry on Ellenbrook Fields / Former Hatfield Aerodrome.

I do not believe that these new plans provide a satisfactory solution to the legal requirements to achieve convenient cross-park access during the life of the quarry and integrate the restored phases into the unaffected part of Ellenbrook Park ("the park") in a timely manner.

I have set out below my reasons and objections below.

A. Requirement to protect the amenity of residents and users of the park

The Inspector has noted that Brett's original Public Access Strategy did not effectively strike a fair balance between maximising the use of the mineral resource and protecting the amenity of residents and users of the park (as required by the Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance).

He noted two specific failures:

a) **to achieve convenient cross-park access during the life of the quarry**
b) **to integrate the restored phases into the unaffected part of EP in a timely manner**.

B. Brett's proposal

As I see it, a crucial factor is that the lagoons impede the provision of attractive, unfettered routes (as described by the Inspector at the first inquiry) across the park from Ellenbrook / Salisbury Village to Smallford.

The lagoons cannot be moved as this would potentially trigger the requirement for a brand-new application and also the Environment Agency have previously said that the lagoons should be in their current position to provide a buffer for the bromate plume.

Brett's proposal attempts to resolve the Inspector's concerns by providing additional paths across the quarry site, including a path between the two lagoons.

C. Reasons why Brett's proposal does not strike a fair balance

The proposal will not achieve cross-park access and does not successfully integrate the restored phases because:

1. **Significant reduction of concrete taxiway.** One of the main routes across the park is the concrete taxiway, which is very popular with all ages because:

- convenience - the surface is great for pushchairs, bikes, wheelchairs and

disabled users, and also provides a useable surface in inclement weather,

- proximity - it is close to Ellenbrook, and
- safety - it provides a clear line of sight and therefore is safe.

It appears that only approximately 40% of the taxiway will remain up to the end of the sports pitches. It will be replaced by alternative routes comprising narrower gravel paths or grass paths, some of which will be by main roads. This substantial reduction of the taxiway will significantly reduce the ability of users to access and enjoy the park.

2. **Paths do not provide attractive/unfettered access.** Routes across the park are required to be attractive and unfettered. Paths next to quarry workings and bunds (3-5m high mounds of earth) are objectively neither attractive nor unfettered. Other footpaths will be narrow and will not afford an attractive visual amenity, particularly when bordered by bunds or fencing. Of great concern are the huge bunds at the Smallford end of the park alongside the main access road.

3. **Seasonal unusability of grass paths.** Most pathways will be grass, though some will be gravel, meaning that regularly-used paths will be unusable in Winter and at other wet times of the year. Notably there will be a narrow grass pathway (approx. 3m) between the two lagoons. In Winter months this will be unusable as the grass surface will turn to mud, similar to the grass pathways on Ellenbrook Fields at the moment, resulting in long diversions around the lagoons.

4. **Noise pollution and safety concerns**. Footpaths will be close to quarry workings, or the access road (with lorries), or internal roads (with dumper trucks), or the plant site. There will be crossings to navigate and vehicles to be mindful of. These factors, with their attending noise and safety risks, will reduce the freedom of users to roam around the park, and are particularly an issue for families with children and dog users.

5. **Wildlife.** The current popular (indeed beloved) access to the diverse wildlife will be destroyed as the quarrying progresses.

6. **Inconvenience.** Users will be forced to take lengthy diversions around the active quarry areas, hindering access to available areas of the park.

Kind regards,
Karen Austin
[redacted]